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**GOVERNOR BARBOUR ANNOUNCES LAW  
ENFORCEMENT GRANT TO COMBAT METH  
PRODUCTION**

(JACKSON, Mississippi) — Governor Haley Barbour today announced the Mississippi Bureau of Narcotics has been awarded a \$449,772 federal grant to combat methamphetamine production and distribution.

"I welcome this valuable new funding as we continue to focus on combating drug crime and protecting law-abiding citizens," Governor Barbour said. "Working together, we have provided more funding for law enforcement and reorganized the Department of Public Safety to increase efficiency; both actions are helping in the fight against drug crime, especially the scourge of meth production and distribution."

Funding for the grant comes from the U.S. Department of Justice's Community-Oriented Policing Services program, which was created in 1994 to provide crime-fighting resources to state and local law enforcement. The state drug agency will use the grant funds for equipment purchases and computer upgrades to more efficiently handle methamphetamine-related issues, Department of Public Safety Commissioner George Phillips said.

Methamphetamine is a highly addictive central nervous system stimulant that can be injected, snorted, smoked or ingested. Unlike other illegal drugs, which are often imported, methamphetamine can be made anywhere, giving the drug the potential to be deadlier and more widespread than crack cocaine.

Makeshift meth labs in Mississippi, first seen in the Delta, are now found statewide, said Mississippi Bureau of Narcotics Director Marshall Fisher. In 2006, after Governor Barbour signed into law a methamphetamine precursor initiative, the Bureau of Narcotics released statistics showing significant reductions in the availability of methamphetamine precursors as well as seizures of methamphetamines and the labs that manufacture it.

In fiscal year 2007, the MBN reported 43 meth-lab seizures, down 63 percent from the 117 meth-lab seizures it reported the fiscal year before.

“Given the strong evidence of significant reductions in meth production, we are confident the meth precursor bill the Legislature passed and I signed into law in July 2005 is working,” Governor Barbour said. “As expected, there are fewer reported incidents of meth labs. Today’s grant to the MBN will be put to good use in our continuing fight against meth production and distribution in Mississippi.”